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COMMENTS OF SCHOOL LUNCH OFFICIALS ON
FRESH PRUNE PROGRAM - 1955

Southeastern Area Supervisor

No adverse reactions to this product reported and no particular problems in handling. School Lunch managers reported that they used this fresh product in the same way that they would use prunes but found that children like them better as the fresh product.

Western Area Supervisor

Program appears to have been well received and no problems were encountered in the handling of this perishable commodity.

Assistant Area Director

Prunes received in very good condition: served fresh and thoroughly enjoyed.

Director, School Lunch Program for Montana

Reported the field representative's reactions - "The Italian plums were very well accepted. At first found them being served fresh. Some schools cooked them and even canned some where they had no cold storage. The women said, we wish we could get this grade of fruit at our stores for use fresh and for canning as these plums are much larger and meatier than we can get in local markets."

"Our big problem in Montana in accepting fresh highly perishable fruit is the weather situation as it seems there are only one or two months in early fall in which such a commodity can be safely handled."

State Director of School Lunch Program - Utah

"All our districts appreciated and enjoyed the Fresh Italian prune program this year. One car went out fresh and two cars went into cans. Have had excellent response as well as coverage and all reports are that both commodities were very satisfactory."

Director of Oregon School Lunch Program

Our children are acquainted with fresh Italian prunes and they are a popular item in the School Lunch program. We could have utilized a much greater quantity than was allocated to us this past season.

Director, Arizona School Lunch Program

"Prunes were well received by all the children and practically all of them were eaten in the fresh form. I have been surprised at the fine keeping quality of the prunes that were placed in our refrigerator."

Director, Wyoming School Lunch Program

The commodity was distributed throughout the State without difficulty, received in good condition and with enthusiasm by the schools. The prunes were served in various fashions: fresh, stewed in sugar syrup, in puddings, upside-down cakes, etc.

Idaho School Lunch Officer

Generally speaking, prunes received in good shape. Served as fresh product and no spoilage evident. Could accept another allocation, if and when available.

Indiana Commodity Distribution Staff to Area Field Supervisor, Chicago

We are pleased to report that all schools who received the prunes and reported to us were very well pleased with them. They indicated that they were very firm but were still very ripe. We had the pleasure of visiting one school that had used some of their fresh prune allocation for prune cobbler which was so well received by the students that they bought fresh prunes after the supply was exhausted.

Missouri, Director of School Lunch Section

The prunes received were of excellent quality and condition, and we would like very much to receive this item again if the condition and quality were as favorable as during this year.

Minnesota Director of Community School Lunch Section

I ordered only one car for distribution in the Twin Cities and contiguous territory. The reason for this that prunes could start out quite ripe, take some 6 or 7 days in transit, and allowing for spotting, unloading, and distributing, 10 days would be consumed with warm weather another consideration.

As it developed, they reached us harder than a Scotch landlord's heart and without exception were consumed raw.

I would like to suggest if we had assurance at the originating point of the solid condition of the fruit, I would have had no hesitance in extending distribution to at least 2 days' trucking out of our unloading points.

Nebraska Director School Lunch Program

Omaha public schools reported the prunes were very acceptable and enthusiastically received. Most acceptable as fresh whole prunes eaten out of hand.

Ohio Director, Public School Lunch Division

All comments that we have received and experiences that we have observed indicate the fresh prunes were a very good commodity. Even though perishable, they were easily handled and we learned of no spoilage. Some schools canned part of their allotment. One district superintendent said that they reduced their allotment since they were unfamiliar with the product, but were sorry later as the children liked them so well. Some schools which did not get an allotment expressed regret after hearing about their use in nearby schools.

Director, South Dakota Department of Public Instruction

Product well accepted by all recipients. About 25% of volume canned and remained eaten fresh. Many inquiries received of future shipments can be expected.

Maine

Prunes were very, very good, served cooked and raw to children at recess time.

Rhode Island

Prunes were served cooked and raw. Keeping qualities very good. Immensely enjoyed.

Pennsylvania

Some were overripe but there was very little loss. Served cooked and raw. No other information regarding other acceptability.

New Hampshire

Prunes received in excellent condition and were of fine quality. Some of the larger schools canned them for use later in season. Most of the schools used them in fresh form. Some were stewed and some were combined with other fruits for dessert serving. Good keeping qualities. School lunch supervisors would like more. One school district had some complaint but investigation revealed that the prunes had not been handled according to instructions.

District of Columbia

Children like the prunes. Were used in cakes and muffins, but most children preferred them raw. State Agency would like more.

Arkansas

All schools contacted stated that the prunes were delicious and that the students enjoyed them. They had only one request, more of them please. We had two schools that canned some of these prunes. A separate report is being submitted.

Colorado

I am very glad to make a report on the plums that were received this fall by the schools on the Eastern Slope. They reached the schools in very fine condition and were a very high quality product. All of the schools that I contacted were very happy to have them, and they could have used much more than they received. They would have been glad to have canned any surplus. Fresh fruits are something that the Eastern Slope schools have very little of.

Kansas

We had no complaints but several schools commented on the excellent quality. Most of the prunes were served fresh to the school youngsters. Were this commodity to be again offered, we are sure they would be readily acceptable. The prunes were served fresh, stewed, cobbler, and upside down cake. They were very well received by children and cooks.

New Mexico

From our information they did an excellent job in getting the prunes to the schools. Our lunchroom managers, cooks, the children and Administrators of schools were very high in their praise of the plums. They were firm and in excellent condition. They were served raw as part of the fruit requirement, and in few instances were stewed and served in fruit cups.

Oklahoma

The prunes were in excellent condition and were praised very highly by the recipients.

Texas

To the best of my knowledge no difficulties were encountered in distributing the fresh Italian Prunes and they were a welcome item on the part of the schools, however, in some instances the prunes were not quite ripe enough when they were received and this caused some adverse comment in relation to their immediate use as a fresh fruit.

FRESH PRUNE PURCHASE PROGRAM - 1955

SUMMARY OF DESTINATION INSPECTIONS

Sixty-two cars were inspected at destination and the fruit in all cars was reported to be firm to firm ripe with an occasional fruit ripe. Decay ranged from 0 to less than 1%.

Thirty-four cars had loads which were slightly shifted to badly shifted showing from a few to as many as 50% bruised and cut fruits in the damaged baskets. The average percentage of damaged baskets in the cars with shifted loads were less than 1%. Only two cars showed soft fruit, one car with 1% and the other with 2% soft.

Temperatures in the cars at destination averaged 38° F at the bottom and 42° at the top of the load. The highest temperature recorded in any car was 62° at the top and 56° at the bottom of the load. All other cars were 50° below with most in the high 30's or low 40's. Lowest temperature recorded was 36° and 34° for top and bottom locations in the loads.

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Fruit Branch
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